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Title:

COVID-19 outcomes in persons with hemophilia: results from a US-based national COVID-19 surveillance registry

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Essentials

- Hemophilia did not offer protection against COVID-19 severity or mortality.
- Hemophilia did not reduce the VTE risk but increased the bleeding risk with COVID-19.
- Older age, chronic medical conditions, and bleeding history adversely affected outcomes in PwH.
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• Pre-COVID VTE events and anticoagulation increased VTE risk with COVID-19 in PwH.

Abstract

Introduction: Hypercoagulable state contributing to thrombotic complications worsens COVID-19 severity and outcomes, while anticoagulation improves outcomes by alleviating hypercoagulability. **Objectives:** Examine whether hemophilia, an inherent hypocoagulable condition, offers protection against COVID-19 severity and reduces VTE risk in persons with hemophilia (PwH). **Patients/Methods:** A 1: 3 propensity score (PS) matched retrospective cohort study used national

COVID-19 registry data (January 2020 through January 2022) to compare outcomes between 300 male PwH and 900 matched controls without hemophilia. **Results:** Analyses of PwH demonstrated known risk-factors (older age, heart failure, hypertension, cancer/malignancy, dementia, renal and liver disease) contributed to severe COVID-19 and/or 30-day-all-cause mortality. Non-CNS bleeding was an additional risk-factor for poor outcomes in PwH. Odds of developing VTE with COVID-19 in PwH were associated with pre-COVID VTE diagnosis (OR 51.9, 95% CI 12.8-266, p<0.001), anticoagulation therapy (OR 12.7, 95% CI 3.01-48.6, p<0.001) and pulmonary disease (OR 16.1, 95% CI 10.4-25.4, p<0.001). Thirty-day-all-cause-mortality (OR 1.27, 95% CI 0.75-2.11, p=0.3), and VTE events (OR 1.32, 95% CI 0.64-2.73, p=0.4) were not significantly different between matched cohorts; however, hospitalizations (OR 1.58, 95% CI 1.20-2.10, p 0.001) and non-CNS bleeding events (OR 4.78, 95% CI 2.98-7.48, p<0.001) were increased in PwH. In multivariate analyses, hemophilia did not reduce adverse outcomes (OR 1.32, 95% CI 0.74-2.31, p 0.2) nor VTE (OR 1.14; 95% CI 0.44-2.67, p 0.8) but increased bleeding risk (OR 4.70, 95% CI 2.98-7.48, p<0.001). **Conclusion:** After adjusting for patient characteristics/comorbidities, hemophilia increased bleeding risk with COVID-19 but did not protect against severe disease and VTE. ata (January 2020 through January 2022) to compare ou
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Keywords: COVID-19; Hemophilia; VTE, mortality, outcomes

Abbreviations: Factor: F; PwH: Persons with hemophilia; COVID-19: Corona Virus Disease-19; ICU: Intensive care unit; CNS: central nervous system; DVT: deep venous thrombosis; VTE: venous thromboembolism; PE: pulmonary embolism; PS: propensity score; F: factor; N3C: National COVID cohort collaborative; WHO: World health organization; OMOP: Observational Medical Outcomes Partnership; ICU: Intensive care unit

1 | INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, caused by SARS-CoV-2 infection, has disproportionately affected people with chronic medical conditions.[1-3] An acquired hypercoagulable state plays a pivotal role in pathogenesis and severity of COVID-19.[4] Consequently, conditions associated with underlying hypercoagulability including older age, cardiovascular disease, renal or liver disease, cancer, pulmonary disease increase the risk of severe COVID-19 by six to eight-fold.[1, 2, 5-12] Clinical manifestations of hypercoagulability include venous thromboembolism (VTE), encompassing deep venous thrombosis (DVT) or pulmonary embolism (PE), and microvascular thrombosis contributing to multi-organ failure.[1, 2, 13, 14] VTE is diagnosed in up to 30% of patients which in turn is associated with adverse outcomes in up to 50% of patients with severe COVID-19.[13, 14] Anticoagulation therapy reduces the mortality in patients hospitalized with COVID-19, potentially through alleviating the hypercoagulable state and thrombogenesis.[15] Therefore, thromboprophylaxis with anticoagulation remains the standardof-care for patients hospitalized with COVID-19.[16, 17] gnt-roid.[1, 2, 5-12] Clinical manirestations or hypercoal
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The association between hypercoagulability and COVID-19 severity raises a critical question whether the hypocoagulable state in patients with inherited coagulation factor deficiencies such as hemophilia A (factor VIII deficiency) and B (factor IX deficiency) offers biologic protection against COVID-19 severity. [18] Hemophilia is a rare but serious bleeding disorder affecting \sim 30,000 males in United States (US).[19] The literature about outcomes of COVID-19 in persons with hemophilia (PwH) is sparce and limited to registry data[20], case series[21, 22], case reports [22-25] and expert opinion.[26] Although several reports suggest that the clinical course of COVID-19 is relatively mild in PwH, they are limited by lack of comparator groups, non-hypothesis-driven analyses, and reporting bias; thus, accurate assessments of risk-factors and outcomes of COVID-19 in PwH is limited.

To address this knowledge gap, we conducted an epidemiological study to examine risk-factors and outcomes of COVID-19 in PwH with specific focus on VTE and bleeding risks. We hypothesized that, given that many comorbidities associated with a hypercoagulable tendency, and the role of thrombogenesis in the development of severe COVID-19 as well as the beneficial effect of

anticoagulation in hospitalized patients – the hypocoagulable state of hemophilia offers a relative benefit against COVID-19 severity. We designed a propensity-score (PS) matched cohort study to investigate whether hemophilia as an exposure offers biologic protection against COVID-19 severity.[27] We used a data-driven approach and leveraged the national surveillance system-National COVID Cohort Collaborative (N3C)- that was implemented to follow trends and outcomes of COVID-19 in United States (US).[1, 28] As of January 2022, the N3C Registry, commonly known as N3C Data Enclave, contained more than 100 million unique subjects including \sim 10 million cases of COVID-19. This large sample size provided an opportunity to address our research questions for a rare disease like hemophilia and generate clinically meaningful results.

2 | STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS

2.1 | Study design and data Source

This 1:3 (cases to controls) PS-matched retrospective observational cohort study included COVID-19 cases with hemophilia and PS-matched controls without hemophilia. Study cohorts were identified from the N3C Data enclave whose data was released for research as of January 31st, 2022. The N3C enclave is a centralized, harmonized, high quality, high-granularity electronic health record repository of COVID-19 cases and controls. The data is pulled from 75+ healthcare facilities across US from a wide geographic distribution and contains patients who have had SARS-CoV-2 testing with a diagnosis of COVID-19. (Supplementary Appendix A).[1, 28, 29] The participating sites enter all laboratory-confirmed, suspected or confirmed, cases with COVID-19 diagnosis as well as controls (no age or demographic restriction) who have tested negative/equivocal for SARS-CoV-2 test results at a ratio of 1:2 (case: controls). For each patient, the cohort entry date is the date of the first SARS-CoV-2 test. The N3C enclave uses the Observational Medical Outcomes Partnership (OMOP) Common Data Model (CDM) to harmonize the data from disparate coding systems with minimal information loss to a standardized vocabulary mapping source concepts from different systems (e.g., ICD-9, ICD-10, RxNorm, CPT4, NDC, etc.).[30, 31] Site data that pass a robust data quality assessment pipeline are integrated into the "release" set for use by the community.[32] ESIGN AND METHODS

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Details about the data transfer, harmonization, quality, and integration processes have been previously published (Supplementary Appendix A).[28]

2.2 | COVID-19 case definition

A COVID-19 case is defined as a patient with positive SARS-CoV-2 test result (either by real-time RT-PCR assay of nasal or pharyngeal swabs and/or serology testing) with one or more ICD-10 or SNOMED diagnostic codes for COVID-19 during the same encounter or on the same date prior to 01/31/2022 (Supplementary Appendix, B). N3C Enclave also includes historical patient data (lookback data) from the same health-care system as of January 1st, 2018 (prior to the first diagnosed case of COVID-19 in the US). These data provide information about pre-existing comorbidities (Supplementary Table S1) and other medical history on study subjects. The cohort definitions and analytic pipelines developed for defining cohort phenotypes (demographic, clinical, laboratory) are publicly available at GitHub.[33] For the print yngels swabs andy of serology testing) with on
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2.3 | Identification of hemophilia cohort

Since hemophilia A and B affects primarily males, the study included only male subjects with hemophilia. The hemophilia cohort was identified by defining a hemophilia concept set (Supplementary Appendix C) using standard OMOP concepts for hemophilia ICD-10 diagnosis codes (hemophilia A/hereditary FVIII deficiency [D66], hemophilia B/ hereditary FIX deficiency[D67]). Additional diagnoses of hemophilic arthropathy (D36.2), and hemophilia therapeutics (J-codes) were included to confirm hemophilia diagnosis. Exclusion criteria included lack of documentation of SARS-CoV-2 test results, and an incorrect hemophilia diagnosis through data review.

2.4 | Patient variables

Patient-level variables extracted from N3C domain tables included demography (age, sex, race/ethnicity, insurance), pre-existing organ comorbidities (cardiovascular, pulmonary, dementia), substance abuse, tobacco smoking, VTE and anticoagulant use) and hemophilia-related variables (renal disease, bleeding comorbidity, hepatitis C and HIV, hemophilia therapeutics) (Table 1).[18, 34, 35] Previously validated OMOP concept sets for N3C cohort were used for defining demographic variables, comorbid conditions, and outcomes (Supplementary Appendix Table S1).[1, 28, 36] Bleeding comorbidity was categorized as hemarthrosis/joint bleeding, CNS-, and non-CNS bleeding. Non-CNS bleeding was limited to soft tissue and organ bleeding outside CNS and joint. New concept sets were developed for categorizing bleeding comorbidities.

2.5 | Identification of PS-matched non-hemophilia cohort

PS-matching variables included demography and following chronic medical comorbidities: cardiac, cerebrovascular, diabetes, dementia, cancer, pulmonary, liver disease, rheumatology, substance abuse, and smoking (Supplementary Appendix S2; Table 1). The variables associated with hemophilia-specific comorbidities and thrombosis - CNS and non-CNS bleeding, hemarthrosis, renal disease, HIV and hepatitis C, hemophilia therapy, VTE and anticoagulation therapy- were not included for PS-matching.[18, 34, 35, 37, 38] re developed for categorizing bleeding comorbidities.
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Supplementary Appendix S2; Table 1). The variables as

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2.6 | Hospital Index Encounter for COVID-19 positive patients

The term "Index encounter" is the longest encounter associated with a COVID-19 diagnosis that met the case definition described in section 2.3.[1, 33] The cohort was limited to all patients who had their earliest SARS-CoV-2 positive test date within 30-days before the start of the index encounter and up to 7-days after the start of the index encounter. Among multiple recorded encounters per patient including ambulatory visits, emergency room visits, inpatient hospitalizations, the longest encounter within the timeframe for COVID-19 was selected. If the patient was recorded as deceased, the most recent visit was selected.

2.7 | Outcome variables

Outcomes were analyzed from the beginning of index encounter through 30-days after the end of index encounter. The primary adverse outcomes were severe COVID-19[39] and/or 30-day-allcause mortality for COVID-19 positive patients. COVID-19 disease severity was assessed using the Clinical Progression Scale designed by WHO (Supplementary Appendix D).[39] Disease severity was assessed as mild, moderate or severe. Ambulatory encounters or encounters <48 hours were considered mild while hospitalization was considered as "moderate to severe" disease depending on the amount of supplemental oxygen, type of ventilatory support and life-saving interventions. The maximum severity documented during patient-specific index encounter was used to assign the severity. Mortality was defined by documentation of death or discharge to hospice.[1, 28, 33]

Other outcomes included indicators of clinical severity: rates and duration of hospitalization and ICU admission, hypoxia (oxygen saturation<90%), use of mechanical ventilation and extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO), rates of VTE and bleeding diathesis (CNS-and non-CNS hemorrhage). Hospitalization was defined as a single index encounter for each laboratoryconfirmed positive patient visit that spanned at least three calendar days. ICU admission was defined as use of life-supportive interventions like requirement of high flow oxygen, or invasive ventilation and or other interventions like ECMO. ppennental baygen, type of ventilatory support and mess
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2.8 | Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval

The N3C Data Enclave is approved under the authority of the National Institute of Health Review Board (#IRB00249128). The N3C data access committee approved the deidentified (Level II) data use request for our project (RP-6A939B). This study was not considered human subject research by University of Iowa IRB.

3 | STATISTICAL ANALYSES

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The logistic regression framework was used to examine associations between hemophilia and COVID-19 adverse outcomes. To minimize confounding and other sources of bias arising from the use of observational data, a propensity model was constructed to match hemophilia patients and controls without hemophilia at a 1:3 ratio. Propensity scores were calculated based on the characteristics listed in Table 1 (demographic variables, comorbidities unrelated to hemophilia), and matching was based on the greedy nearest neighbor matching algorithm with a caliper of 0.1 pooled standard deviations.[40, 41] The matching procedure ensured that the comparison groups were similar in demography and distribution of clinical comorbidities so that attributable risk of hemophilia could be estimated.

Summary statistics were calculated for demographic and clinical measures stratified by cohort. Continuous measures were presented as medians (interquartile ranges, IQR) and categorical measures were presented as counts (percentages). Differences between cohorts were assessed using Wilcoxon rank sum and Fisher's Exact tests for continuous and categorical variables, respectively. Univariate logistic models were fit to assess the relationships of all demographic and clinical measures and severe or fatal COVID-19. Subsequently, multivariate model selection was conducted using a forward stepwise approach based on AIC (Akaike information criterion) to identify the optimal predictor set associated with severe or fatal COVID-19. Models were also constructed with the purpose of examining the impact of anticoagulation on VTE during the COVID-19 index encounter and bleeding during the COVID-19 index encounter and how that impact may differ between persons with and without hemophilia. An interaction term between anticoagulant use and hemophilia status was used in these models to assess whether anticoagulant use had a different effect on each outcome variable when it was used by PwH. Odds ratios point estimates, and 95% confidence intervals were reported for all univariate and multivariate modeling predictors along with p-values. Additional sub-group analyses were performed to assess the risk factors for VTE and bleeding during index encounter. Given multiple outcomes of interest, we considered a more stringent two-sided alpha of 0.01 to determine statistical significance for differences in outcome rates. esumated.

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3.1 | Sample size justification

With a sample of 300 PwH and 900 matched controls, if we assume a 20% event rate in our controls and we employ our statistical significance threshold of 0.01, we have 94.4% power to detect a difference between our groups if the true event rate in our PwH is 10%.

The N3C Download committee reviewed and granted an appeal for this manuscript to report cell numbers as low as 10 (instead of the normal threshold of 20) due to rarity of hemophilia. Cell count <10 was not reported to protect the privacy of individuals. All analyses were performed within the N3C Data Enclave on the Palantir platform.

4 | RESULTS

4.1 | Cohort characteristics and outcomes

From the cohort of 1,676 PwH identified from the dataset of 4,094,889 males, a total of 300 PwH diagnosed with COVID-19 were included in the study (Figure 1). There were 235 (78%) patients with Hemophilia A, 46 (15%) with Hemophilia B, while the remaining 19 (6.3%) were categorized as hemophilia unspecified as they had a diagnosis code for both hemophilia A and B. Eight patients (hemophilia A, 6; hemophilia B, 2) had inhibitors (antibodies against factor VIII or IX). We constructed a PS-matched cohort of 900 patients without hemophilia (section 2.5). The demographic and clinical characteristics for each cohort are shown in Table 1. The study population was 60% white, and insurance status was unknown in 75%. A majority were overweight or obese (70%). Hypertension was the most common comorbidity (40%), while only 18% of the cohort had a Charlson comorbidity index (CCI) of >5.[42] **haracteristics and outcomes**

576 PwH identified from the dataset of 4,094,889 males,

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56 (15%) with Hemophilia B, while the remaining 19 (6.5

cified as they had a

4.1.1 | Comparison of COVID-19 patient characteristics between PwH and those without hemophilia

As expected, hemophilia related unmatched comorbidities- hepatitis C, CNS- and non-CNS bleeding events, hemarthrosis, hemophilia therapy - were significantly higher in PwH, (p<0.001) except renal disease. The risk of renal comorbidity was significantly lower in hemophilia cohort compared to the non-hemophilia controls. Only 10% (n=30) of PwH received hemophilia specific therapies. A higher proportion of PwH had history of VTE, 6.9% (n=20) compared to 4% (n=35) in the nonhemophilia cohort and only 5.7%, (n=17) of PwH were on anticoagulation therapy compared to

8.3% (n=75) without hemophilia prior to the COVID-19 diagnosis (p>0.2). A similar proportion of PwH and those without hemophilia, (15%, n=45 versus 16%, n=147; p=0.2), received anticoagulation therapy during the index encounter, primarily with heparins.

4.1.2 | Comparison of COVID-19 outcomes between PwH and those without hemophilia

We compared the clinical outcomes between PwH and PS-matched controls (Table 2). The majority of COVID-19 outcomes were similar between hemophilia and non-hemophilia cohorts (Table 2). PwH were more likely to have moderate severity of COVID-19 compared to the non-hemophilia cohort (OR, 1.58, 95% CI 1.14 to 2.18, p=0.004). But only a small proportion had severe COVID-19 in each cohort (<3% each). The 30-day-all-cause mortality was 1.33 times higher among PwH compared to non-hemophilia cohort (5.7 vs. 4.3%), but this difference was not statistically significant (OR 1.26; 95% CI, 0.86 to 1.81, p=0.2). Hospitalization rates were significantly higher among PwH compared to those without (OR, 1.59; 95% CI, 1.20 to 2.10, p=0.001), but ICU admission rates were similar between the cohorts (<3.0% versus 3.1%). PwH experienced longer durations of ICU stay, but this was not statistically significant (median, 34-days versus 18-days, p=0.074). Non-CNS bleeding events were higher among PwH (OR, 3.74; 95% CI, 2.46 to 5.71, p<0.001), yet the rates of index VTE were similar between the two cohorts (OR, 1.28; 95% CI, 0.56 to 2.72, p=0.4). There were no notable differences between the rates of hypoxemia, invasive ventilation, and ECMO between PwH and their matched controls as shown in Table 2. % CI 1.14 to 2.18, p=0.004). But only a small proportion
each). The 30-day-all-cause mortality was 1.33 times hi
mophilia cohort (5.7 vs. 4.3%), but this difference was ne
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4.2 | Analyses of hemophilia cohort for risk-factor assessment

4.2.1 | Risk factors for adverse outcomes in PwH during COVID-19 index encounter

We constructed univariate models using only the hemophilia cohort to identify risk factors for adverse outcomes and found that older age (OR 1.04, 95% CI 1.01-1.07; p<0.001), heart failure (OR, 6.72, 95% CI 2.46 to 17.4; p<0.001), advanced liver disease (OR 6.36, 95% 2.05 to 18.2, p <0.001), dementia (OR 7.36, 95% CI 1.44 to 32.1; p=0.009), hypertension (OR 3.42, 95% CI 1.49 to 8.37; p=0.005), malignancy (OR 4.71, 95 CI 1.77 to 11.8; p=0.001), renal disease (95% CI 5.55, 95% CI 1.95 to14.7; p<0.001) were significant risk factors (Figure 2, Supplementary Table S6). However

other factors that have been identified in the general population, such as cerebrovascular disease or diabetes, were not found to be a significant risk factors for severe outcomes in PwH.

4.2.2 | Risk factors for VTE in PwH during COVID-19 index encounter

The subset analyses were performed to identify risk factors for VTE in PwH during index encounter. A previous history of VTE and/or anticoagulation use were associated with an increased risk of VTE during index encounter, [OR 51.9 (95% CI 12.8 – 266, p<0.001) and OR 12.7 (95% CI 3.01-48.6, p<0.001), respectively] (Figure 3 A; Supplementary Table S7, S8). Additionally, preexisting pulmonary disease was also shown to be associated with index-VTE (OR 5.00, 95% CI $1.5-17.9$, $p = 0.01$).

4.2.3 | Risk factors for bleeding in PwH during COVID-19 index encounter

The subset analyses to identify risk factors for bleeding showed that the odds of bleeding events (CNS- and non-CNS) with COVID-19 were increased by the presence of moderate liver disease (OR 4.37, 95% CI 1.65-11.4; p=0.002), tobacco smoking (OR 4.10, 95% CI 1.64-10.1; p=0.002), hepatitis C (OR 2.88, 95% CI 1.41-5.73), non-CNS bleeding before COVID-19 (OR 6.87, 95% CI 3.69-13.3; p=0.003), and hemarthrosis (OR 3.41, 95% CI 1.7-6.7; <0.001)(Figure 3B; Supplementary Table S7, S9). dex encounter, [OR 51.9 (95% CI 12.8 – 266, p<0.001) are
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4.3 | Analyses of PS-matched cohorts for risk factor assessment

4.3.1 | Risk factors for COVID-19 adverse outcomes in the PS-matched cohort during COVID-19 index encounter

In the univariate model, multiple previously identified comorbidities - older age, cardiovascular disease, cerebrovascular disease, liver disease, pulmonary disease, bleeding, smoking, VTE, anticoagulation- significantly increased the odds of adverse outcomes for the entire cohort.

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However, the diagnosis of hemophilia was not associated with severe disease (Supplementary Table S2). Similarly, in the multivariate models, participants' hemophilia status did not significantly influence COVID-19 adverse outcomes (OR, 1.32; 95% CI 0.74 to 2.31, p=0.3; Table 3). However, older age, heart failure, moderate liver disease, and CNS-bleeding significantly increased the odds of adverse outcomes by 1.03 (95% CI, 1.02 to 1.05; p<0.001), 3.53 (95% CI 1.97 to 6.31; p<0.001), 7.05 (95 CI, 3.69 to 13.4; p<0.001), 5.39 (95% CI, 1.70 to 16.0; p=0.003) respectively.

4.3.2 | Risk factors for VTE in the PS-matched cohort during COVID-19 index encounter

The univariate analyses for VTE risk factors in the entire PS-matched cohort showed that older age, coronary artery disease, diabetes with complications, hypertension, history of VTE, and previous anticoagulation use were associated with increased odds for VTE for both PwH and non-hemophilia patients [Supplementary Table S3, S4]. In the multivariate model, older age (1.02, 95% CI 1.01 to 1.04; p=0.002) and pre-index anticoagulation use (3.95, 95% CI 1.54 to 9.37; <0.001) significantly increased the odds of developing index VTE (Table 4). The interaction term between anticoagulant use and hemophilia was not statistically significant (OR 0.56, 95% CI 0.04 to 6.98; p=0.6), meaning that among our study population, the risk of developing index VTE that was associated with prior anticoagulant use was similar whether a person had hemophilia or not. ses for VTE risk factors in the entire PS-matched cohort
ase, diabetes with complications, hypertension, history corre associated with increased odds for VTE for both Pw
tary Table S3, S4]. In the multivariate model, older

4.3.3 | Risk factors for bleeding in the PS-matched cohort during COVID-19 index encounter

Univariate analyses of CNS and non-CNS bleeding outcome for the entire PS-matched cohort showed that hemophilia A, older age, heart failure, cerebrovascular disease, diabetes with complications, coronary disease, liver disease, malignancy, renal disease, substance abuse, tobacco smoking, pre-index anticoagulation use, HIV and hepatitis C, and history of bleeding increased the odds of bleeding by 1.02 to 11-fold (Supplementary Table S3, S5). In a multivariate analysis, hemophilia and liver disease significantly increased the odds for bleeding events, 4.70 (95% CI 2.98 to 7.48; p<0.001) and 4.26 (95% CI, 2.07 to 8.85; p<0.001) respectively (Table 4).

5 | Discussion

This is the first study from US to evaluate outcomes of COVID-19 in PwH compared to those without hemophilia from a large COVID-19 database. Our study addressed the question whether the diagnosis of hemophilia was associated with protection against COVID-19 severity and other clinical outcomes. We found no significant difference in mortality (5.7% vs 4.3%, OR 1.3, 95% CI 0.7-2.4), in PwH compared to matched controls without hemophilia and having hemophilia was not a risk factor for death (OR 1.32, 95% CI 0.74-2.31). We did find that PwH were more likely to have moderate COVID-19 severity and to be hospitalized.[39] However, other markers of severity, including ICU admission and need for oxygen therapy was not different in PwH compared to controls. These findings are contrary to the findings of previous studies which suggested a milder course of COVID-19 in PwH, including a study from the Madrid Registry (n=345; PwH, 246)[20], case series from Iran (n=61; PwH, 42)[43] and Italy (n=13)[22] Although few case-reports have reported severe disease and mortality in PwH with cardiovascular disease, [22, 25] these studies were limited by small sample sizes and were not able to compare outcomes to similarly matched patients without hemophilia as we did in this study. n (OR 1.32, 95% CI 0.74-2.31). We ald nnd that PWH We
severity and to be hospitalized.[39] However, other malion and need for oxygen therapy was not different in Pw
mgs are contrary to the findings of previous studies whic

We postulated that PwH may be at decreased risk for VTE with COVID-19; however, we found the VTE incidence was similar for PwH and matched non-hemophilia controls (3.8% vs 2.9%, OR 1.3, 95%CI 0.6-2.7). This suggests that PwH with COVID-19 are not protected against VTE despite the hypocoagulable state of hemophilia. It is important to note is that the rates of VTE with COVID-19 in this study are lower than what has been previously reported in other studies $\left[\sim 30\% \right]$. [1, 44] The reasons for this are not clear, however, we did not examine the VTE rates over time during the study period. The advent of SARS-CoV-2 therapeutic interventions, changes in anticoagulation practice, and SARS-CoV-2 vaccine may have contributed to lower VTE rates during the observational period. In addition, we were not able to access and review radiograph reports to identify individuals with VTE who were not coded with a VTE diagnosis. We also examined risk factors for VTE in PwH and found that a prior history of VTE and anticoagulation use increased the risk of an index-VTE event. This may be expected as those individuals being treated for a VTE would likely be identified to have an index-VTE.

Of all the comorbidities examined, we found only pulmonary disease as a risk for VTE in PwH.[45] Underlying lung pathology may be exacerbated by SARS-CoV-2 infection which in turn contributes to local and systemic thrombosis.[13] Although anticoagulation thromboprophylaxis is commonly prescribed to hospitalized patients with COVID-19, providers may not routinely administer anticoagulation to PwH due to bleeding risk. Therefore, it was surprising to note that in our dataset the frequency of anticoagulation use was similar in PwH and non-hemophilia patients (15% vs 16%) during the index encounter. The benefit of anticoagulation in PwH could not be determined in this study as the VTE rate was not different between the two cohorts and there was no interaction found with hemophilia and anticoagulation, suggesting that anticoagulant use did not influence VTE rate. In contrast to the general population, we did not find an association between VTE and adverse COVID-19 outcomes in PwH (OR 0.57, 95%CI 0.03-2.93).[14] We speculate that thrombotic complications in PwH may be associated with endothelial dysfunction with the viral infection, and that it is less dependent on the procoagulant functions of FVIII and FIX.[4] Therefore, the deficiency of FVIII and FIX, regardless of its severity, may not offer significant benefit towards reducing thrombotic risk in the presence of vasculopathy.

While VTE rates did not differ between PwH and matched controls, non-CNS bleeding was increased in PwH (19% vs 5.9%, OR 3.7, 95%CI 2.5-5.6). Unlike VTE, non-CNS bleeding increased the odds of poor outcomes in PwH (OR 2.70, 95%CI 1.18-6.33). However, both anticoagulation and hemophilia therapy use did not increase (or decrease) the risk of COVID-19 severity. Of the comorbidities investigated, hepatitis C and liver disease were significantly associated with bleeding in PwH. This finding of increased bleeding might be expected in PwH, however, the influence of anticoagulation and hemophilia therapy factor on bleeding risk could not be determined in this study due to the small sample size and low event rate. This suggests that prevention of bleeding is critical in PwH with COVID-19, however additional studies are needed to better risk stratify PwH who are appropriate for anticoagulation prophylaxis and factor replacement. FID-19 outcomes in FWIT (OK 0.57, 9596C1 0.05-2.95).[1-1
tions in PwH may be associated with endothelial dysfun
is less dependent on the procoagulant functions of FVIII
II and FIX, regardless of its severity, may not offer

We showed that PwH shared common risk-factors for COVID-19 adverse outcomes which have been identified in the general population.[1, 2, 6-9, 11, 12] These comorbidities included cardiovascular disease, liver disease, cancer, dementia, and renal disease. Other common risks such as obesity and diabetes were not demonstrated in PwH We showed that PwH shared common riskfactors for COVID-19 adverse outcomes which have been identified in the general population.[1, 2, 6-9, 11, 12] These comorbidities included

5.1 | Strengths and limitations

The major strength of this study is the large sample size of N3C database which enabled us to apply propensity-matching to estimate the independent effect of hemophilia on COVID-19 outcomes.[27] Since this registry is drawn from wide geographical distribution, it is representative of US population. We were able to use this representative sample to address questions of VTE and bleeding risk in a rare disease like hemophilia and its associations with severe COVID-19. However, the study has several limitations in addition to those that are inherent to the observational design. First, the source data for this study is derived from electronic medical records. It is subject to coding errors, accuracy and completeness of data, missing data, and variability in data entry among various healthcare systems.[46] Second, we were not able to examine the association between hemophilia severity (mild, moderate and severe) and disease outcomes. The current ICD-10 manual does not include hemophilia severity codes which limited our ability to characterize hemophilia severity.[36] Our data shows that only 10% of our study cohort received hemophilia therapy implying a larger fraction of PwH may have non-severe disease. This is difficult to explain as ~40% of PwH seen at tertiry care facilties have severe hemophilia. Since bleeding comborbidity adversely affected COVID-19 outcomes, and hemophilia severity directly affects bleeding phenotype, it is critical to have further studies to better understand this relationship. Third, caution should be applied while generalizing our findings to entire hemophilia population in US as we identified only \sim 5% (n=1,676) of national hemophilia population (n= \sim 30,000). Therefoe, despite being the largest study so far, our finding may not be applicable to entire hemophilia population in US.[19] Furthermore, the cohort is subject to selection bias as it included only those individuals who sought medical care for COVID-19 at N3C participating sites and heterogeneity in care delivery among sites may influence observed outcomes. Forth, the limited historical data within the N3C platform may have resulted in missing hemophilia diagnoses if it were not pulled into lookback data and not included into the patient encounter. Lastly, we did not study the secular changes in pandemic due to lack of viral strain and vaccination data within N3C, which could have provided additional insights about lower event rates observed in our study. Despite these limitations, our analyses used a large sample that is most representative U.S. cohort of COVID-19 cases and controls to date. ary and completeness of data, missing data, and variabiliptively at the set of mild, moderate and severe) and disease outcomes. The ude hemophilia severity codes which limited our ability [36] Our data shows that only 10%

In summary, this is the first comparative study that evaluated the outcomes of COVID-19 in PwH using a diverse sample size from the largest COVID-19 cohort from US. The study shows that hemophilia is not protective against COVID-19 adverse outcomes and VTE. We find that bleeding

comorbidity was associated with poor outcomes with COVID-19 in PwH. The management of COVID-19 in PwH needs careful assessments of bleeding and thrombotic risk and an ongoing investigation as the pandemic is transitioning towards an endemic state. Future studies are needed to better understand how to best use hemophilia therapeutics and anticoagulation therapy for optimal management of PwH with COVID-19.

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Author contributions

Conceptualization and study design: AS; methodology: AS, CT, CO, LW; concept mapping: AS, CT CO; data-extraction: CO; data interpretation and writing: LW, AS, CT; study methodology, interpretation of analyses and manuscript writing: AS, CT, CO, LW, RS, EC.

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N3C Attribution

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

AS has received honoraria and served as institutional principal investigator for clinical studies from CSL Behring, Genentech, Pfizer, Bristol-Meier Squibb, Takeda and NIH.

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Figure Legends:

Figure 1: Flow diagram showing COVID-19 study cohort selection-persons with hemophilia (cases) and propensity matched cohort of patients without hemophilia (controls).

Figure 2: Univariate analyses of persons with hemophilia (PwH) with COVID-19 cohort showing risk-factors for adverse outcomes at index encounter. Figure A shows association with hemophilia and VTE related variables while Figure B shows association with systemic comorbidities.

Figure 3: Univariate analyses of persons with hemophilia (PwH) with COVID-19 showing risk factors for venous thromboembolism (VTE) and bleeding present at COVID-19 index encounter that were extracted from historical "lookback data". Figure A shows hemophilia and VTE related

variables while figure B shows systemic comorbidities.

Table 1: Patient characteristics of 1: 3 propensity score-matched conorts of male patients with and without hemophilia and COVID-19.

BMI: Body mass index; overweight, BMI>25-30 kg/m² and obesity, BMI > 30 kg/m²; CNS, central nervous system;

\$ indicates baseline matching variables for propensity score matching for cohorts with and without hemophilia;

**hemophilia therapy includes plasma derived and recombinant (standard and extended half-life) factor VIII or IX concentrates, bypassing agents (NovoSeven, Kcentra and Prothrombin complex concentrates) and nonfactor therapy with emicizumab;

#received bypassing agents (NovoSeven) for bleeding control

***Anticoagulation therapy included direct oral anticoagulants (DOACs), low molecular weight heparin (LMWH), unfractionated heparin (UFH) and warfarin

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Table 2: Outcomes of COVID-19 (during index encounter and or within 30 days of initiation of index encounter) in a 1: 3 propensity score-matched cohorts of male patients with and without hemophilia.

¹ Statistics presented: n (%); median (IQR)

² Statistical tests performed: Fisher's exact test; Wilcoxon rank-sum test

Abbreviations: CI: confidence interval; ICU: intensive care unit; DVT: Deep venous thrombosis; PE: pulmonary embolism;

ECMO: extracorporeal membranous oxygenation; NS: Not significant; CNS: central nervous system

* The N3C Download committee reviewed and granted an appeal for this manuscript to report cell numbers as low as 10

(instead of the normal threshold of 20). Cell counts <10 were not reported to protect the privacy of individuals.

** Venous thromboembolism includes deep venous thrombosis and pulmonary embolism

Table 3: Results of multivariate model predicting adverse outcomes, severe COVID-19 and 30-day-all-cause-mortality, for the 1: 3 propensity score-matched cohorts of patients with COVID-19 with hemophilia with COVID-19 and without hemophilia and COVID-19.

Table 4: Multivariate analyses of propensity-score matched cohorts of patients with and without hemophilia showing hemophilia was not a risk-factor for venous thromboembolism and bleeding: A. Risk factors for venous thromboembolism; B. Risk factors for bleeding

¹ OR = Odds Ratio, CI = Confidence Interval

Figure 1: Flow diagram showing study COVID-19 cohort selection-persons with hemophilia (cases) and propensity matched cohort of patients without hemophilia (matched controls).

A. Risk for severe COVID-19 outcomes in PwH: Hemophilia and VTE related variables

B. Risk for severe COVID-19 outcomes in PwH: Systemic comorbidities

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A. Risk for VTE and Bleeding outcomes in PwH with COVID-19: Hemophilia and VTE related variables

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B. Risk for VTE and Bleeding outcomes in PwH with COVID-19: Systemic comorbidities

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